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Statement by the President

PRST 31/1. Situation of human rights in Haiti

At the 64th meeting, held on 24 March 2016, the President of the Human Rights Council made the following statement:

"The Human Rights Council,

1. Thanks the Independent Expert for his report on the situation of human rights in Haiti and takes note of the latest legal and political developments in Haiti, in particular the following:

(*a*) The presentation to the executive branch, on 14 October 2015, of the preliminary draft bill on the Code of Criminal Procedure by the members of the Presidential Commission on Justice Reform;

(*b*) The investiture, on 1 December 2015, of the members of the National Committee for the Fight against Human Trafficking;

(*c*) The holding of legislative and presidential elections, respectively in August and October 2015, and the initiation of the activities of the new Parliament in January 2016;

(*d*) The deferral of the second round of the presidential elections owing to concerns about the electoral process;

(*e*) The signing, on 5 February 2016, of a political agreement between the executive branch and the presiding officers of the two chambers of the Parliament with regard to moving forward with the electoral process and to institutional continuity;

(*f*) The election, on 14 February 2016, of an interim President in accordance with the terms of that agreement;

(*g*) The announcement by the interim President, on 13 March 2016, of the composition of the nine-member Provisional Electoral Council, which includes three women and is pending confirmation by presidential decree;

(*h*) The appointment by decree, on 22 March 2016, of the Head of the Government;

2. Welcomes the renewed commitment of Haiti to the effective implementation of the international human rights treaties to which Haiti is a party, with the consideration of its second and third periodic reports by the Committee on the Rights of the Child[1] in January 2016 and of its eighth and ninth periodic reports by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women[2] in March 2016;

3. Encourages the Government of Haiti to continue to cooperate fully and effectively with the treaty bodies and to submit its pending reports to said bodies as appropriate;

4. Also encourages the Government of Haiti to ratify the pending Conventions during the fiftieth legislature and to follow up the draft Criminal Code and draft Code of Criminal Procedure, which underpin the reform and modernization of the judicial system;

5. Welcomes the reaffirmation of the commitment of the Haitian authorities to improve the living conditions of Haitian women and men by, inter alia, devoting greater attention to respect for human rights, and in that regard is concerned by the fact that some challenges remain in the human rights sphere and that further progress needs to be made;

6. Also welcomes the political agreement concluded on 6 February 2016 to prevent the creation of an institutional vacuum, and calls upon the country's political stakeholders to respect the terms of that agreement within the time frames indicated in order to take forward the electoral process launched in August 2015, the completion of which will help to restore constitutional order in Haiti;

7. Urges the Government of Haiti, in this context, to continue strengthening the rule of law by, inter alia, combating impunity and corruption and tackling crime and its causes, and strongly encourages the Government to continue building the capacity of the national police force and the judicial and penitentiary system with a view to ensuring the proper functioning of public institutions and services and the enjoyment of all human rights;

8. Encourages the Government of Haiti to strengthen national human rights institutions, in particular the Office of the Ombudsman, and to provide it with adequate resources;

9. Strongly encourages the Government of Haiti to continue to adopt the necessary political and legal measures to safeguard the rights of members of vulnerable groups, including child domestic workers, and to accord special attention to the situation of persons who lack identity documents;

10. Also strongly encourages the Government of Haiti to increase women's participation in political affairs and to continue to combat gender-based violence and discrimination;

11. Acknowledges that the full enjoyment of all civil, political, economic, social and cultural human rights constitutes a factor conducive to peace, stability and development in Haiti;

[1] CRC/C/HTI/2-3.
[2] CEDAW/C/HTI/8-9.

12. Encourages the international community as a whole and, in particular, international donors, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, the group of countries known as the Friends of Haiti and the specialized bodies of the United Nations, in particular the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to step up their cooperation and coordination efforts with the Haitian authorities with a view to the full realization of all human rights in Haiti,

13. Welcomes and approves the request of the Haitian authorities for a one-year extension of the mandate of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Haiti, within the framework of technical assistance and capacity-building;

14. Encourages the Independent Expert to continue to work with international bodies, including the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, donors and the international community to raise their awareness of the need to provide their expertise and sufficient resources to support the efforts of the Haitian authorities to rebuild the country and pursue sustainable development;

15. Also encourages the Independent Expert to continue to work with the Government of Haiti, civil society and non-governmental organizations in Haiti, and invites the Government to continue its active cooperation with civil society;

16. Invites the Independent Expert to assist the Government of Haiti in implementing his own recommendations and those made by other special procedures;

17. Also invites the Independent Expert to present to the Council, at its thirty-fourth session, a report on the situation of human rights in Haiti, and further invites him to undertake a mission to Haiti and to report on that mission to the Council at its thirty-fourth session."